

consideration the bill (H.R. 5522) to require the Secretary of Labor to issue interim and final occupational safety and health standards regarding worker exposure to combustible dust, and for other purposes:

Mr. HARE. Madam Chairman, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 5522, the Combustible Dust Explosion and Fire Prevention Act and commend Chairman GEORGE MILLER for his tireless efforts on behalf of America's workers.

Our Nation was horrified by news of the February 7 explosion at the Imperial Sugar Refinery in Port Wentworth, GA. I think we were even more stunned by the fact that it was caused by "combustible dust." Although, combustible dust explosions are well documented by the Chemical Safety Board, most employers, workers and the general public are not aware that accumulated dust can cause such destruction. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that not enough is being done to keep workplaces clean and safe from this hazard.

During a March 12, 2008, hearing in the Education and Labor Committee, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, OSHA, Assistant Secretary, Edwin Foulke testified that OSHA has established a housekeeping and ventilation standard, as well as developed programs to address combustible dust hazards. While I appreciate these efforts, frankly they are not enough.

For one, the housekeeping standard is too vague to be useful, and secondly, these measures are "voluntary." When regulations are voluntary, people do not follow them. In my experience as the former President of UNITE HERE Local 617, most employers do not address hazards if doing so interferes with their bottom line or costs time and money.

At this same hearing, witnesses also testified that absent a comprehensive OSHA standard for combustible dust, no one can be confident that dust hazards will be cited and corrected prior to the occurrence of additional accidents.

In fact, the Chemical Safety Board ruled that in addition to the Imperial Sugar incident, several other recent refinery explosions in North Carolina, Kentucky and Indiana could have been prevented if the facilities had complied with the safety and engineering practices contained in National Fire Protection Association standard 484 and 654.

I have often said in this House how frustrated I am that we wait for an emergency to occur before reacting, rather than working to prevent it in the first place. We tend to pass laws, establish regulations and mitigate hazards after disasters and fatalities have occurred.

Today, by passing the Combustible Dust Explosion and Fire Prevention Act, we take a proactive step to protect workers rather than waiting for even one more injury.

Specifically, this bill directs OSHA to issue an interim final combustible dust standard within 90 days. The standard would include measures to minimize hazards associated with combustible dust through improved housekeeping, engineering controls, worker training and a written combustible dust safety program. OSHA would then be required to issue a final standard within eighteen months. In addition to items required in the interim standard, the final standard would include requirements

for building design and explosion protection. Finally, OSHA would have to include combustible dusts in the Hazard Communication Standard which requires workers to receive information and training about the hazards they face.

Again, I thank Chairman MILLER and the committee staff for their hard work on this legislation and urge all my colleagues to vote "yes" on final passage.

---

RECOGNIZING THE HONORABLE  
KENNETH GRAY, RETIRED U.S.  
CONGRESSMAN FROM ILLINOIS

---

**HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 1, 2008*

Mr. COSTELLO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the distinguished career of the Honorable Kenneth Gray and to express appreciation for his years of service to his country and to the residents of southern Illinois.

A native son of West Frankfort, IL, Ken is a man of varied interests and talents. He was both a licensed pilot and auctioneer. From 1942 to 1954, he owned Gray Motors in West Frankfort and also operated an air service in Benton from 1948 to 1954.

In World War II, Ken answered his country's call to service at the age of 18, which took him to North Africa and Italy as well as combat missions over southern France and central Europe. Ken's decorations for his service in World War II included 3 bronze stars.

Upon returning home from the war, Ken became involved in assisting his fellow veterans and it was through these endeavors that he was encouraged to run for the U.S. Congress. Ken won election from the 25th Congressional District of Illinois in 1954 as a freshman member of the 84th Congress and he continued to serve for a total of 10 successive terms. Because of health concerns, Ken did not run for re-election in 1974 but ran again, and won, in 1984 and served another two terms, representing his beloved southern Illinois in the U.S. House of Representatives.

As a U.S. Congressman, Ken was a tireless advocate for the needs of the people of southern Illinois and built a reputation as a member who worked well with his colleagues to get the job done. On a personal note, I have always been grateful to Ken for what he did for me when I was first elected to Congress. I was elected in a special election in August 1988 to complete the term of Mel Price, who passed away that year. Ken resigned his position on the Transportation Committee, which made a seat available for me and gave me seniority over other members who were first elected in 1988 to start the 101st Congress.

Since retiring from Congress in 1988, Ken has continued to work hard for the needs of the people of southern Illinois. He has served on several boards and projects, most notably as a board member of the Rend Lake Conservancy District. He has also worked on a number of initiatives to improve rural health care, especially in Franklin County, IL. Ken is fre-

quently a speaker at local political and charitable events which benefit a number of organizations, such as the Poshard Foundation for Abused Children.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in an expression of appreciation to the Honorable Kenneth Gray for his years of service to this body and to the people of southern Illinois and to wish him and his family the very best in the future.

---

WOMEN IN THE PETROCHEMICAL  
INDUSTRY—LISA VANDER LAAN

---

**HON. TED POE**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, May 1, 2008*

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, today I am proud to pay tribute to Lisa Vander Laan, Plant Manager of ExxonMobil's Chemical Polyethylene Plant, in Beaumont, Texas.

Mrs. Vander Laan earned a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Louisiana State University, graduating summa cum laude and receiving the University Medal. She joined Exxon Corporation in 1989 as a process engineer in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and spent her first decade in various manufacturing assignments in engineering and supervision before becoming intermediates technical manager.

Vander Laan spent the next 7 years at the corporation's Houston headquarters for chemicals in marketing and business planning, as global basic chemicals financial manager, Americas low density polyethylene product manager, and ExxonMobil Chemicals global manufacturing planning manager. In February 2007, she took over at the polyethylene plant in Beaumont as plant manager.

Mrs. Vander Laan is seeing more women in leadership roles in the petrochemical industry. When she started in engineering, there were very few female supervisors and managers. She now believes there are significantly more women in the petrochemical industry jobs like chemical engineering. She says ExxonMobil encourages girls to get into math and science, and has an "Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day" in the spring.

Chemical Engineering seems to run in the family. Vander Laan's father is a chemical engineer as well as an older and younger sister, in addition, "all the girls married ExxonMobil guys". She is married to Jeffrey Dale Vander Laan and has two children, Cecilia and Abigail. She doesn't know if her daughters will show interest in chemical engineering like she and her sisters, who love math.

Mrs. Vander Laan is on the board of the Beaumont Area United Way and a member of the Southeast Texas Plant Manager's Forum, for which she serves as chairman of the environmental committee.

Madam speaker, Lisa Vander Laan is a success story in the male dominated petrochemical industry, and I am proud to celebrate her accomplishments.